

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 16491

EXDIS

FROM VATICAN OFFICE

E.O. 11652 XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, PINS,.)3, VT, US, SY
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH MARONITE PATRIARCH KHURAYSH

REF: A. STATE 224192 B. ROME 16286

1. DURING CALL ON PATRIARCH KHURAYSH, SEPTEMBER 6, SARROS CARRIED OUT INSTRUCTIONS IN REFTEL A. PATRIARCH REITERATED INTEREST IN AN EVENTUAL MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AND STATED THAT DURING MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS ON SEPTEMBER 4, SARKIS HAD ASSURED HIM HE WOULD INSTRUCT LEBANESE AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON TO PROVIDE GOL ENDORSEMENT OF PATRIARCH'S REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER.

2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROMISE GIVEN BY PATRIARCH IN ROME'S 16286 PATRIARCH HANDED SARROS TWO MEMORANDA FOR TRANSMISSION TO WASHINGTON. WE WILL POUCH MEMORANDA TO NEA ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8.

3. THE FIRST MEMORANDUM ENTITLED, "LEBANESE QUESTION: FACTOR ANALYSIS" OUTLINES THE IMPACT ON LEBANESE IMBROGLIO PALESTINIANS, MOHAMMEDANS, MARXISTS, ISRAELIS AND SYRIANS. IT CONCLUDES WITH THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

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QTE. THE LEBANESSE CHRISTIANS DEMAND GUARANTEES FOR THEIR LIBERTY: IN LEBANON AS IT NOW IS; IN AN EVENTUAL LEBANESE SYSTEM OF CANTONS OR UNDER A LEBANESE FEDERATION (TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE DEMOGRAPHIC PHENOMENON TOGETHER WITH THE OTHER MENACES DESCRIBED ABOVE).
IF THESE GUARANTEES ARE NOT FORTHCOMING, THE WEST WILL LOSE AN IMPORTANT BRIDGE-HEAD FOR PENETRATING THE ORIENT. LEBANESE

SYMPATHISERS WITH THE WEST WILL BE DISCOURAGED IF THEY FIND THEMSELVES ABANDONED.

MOREOVER, A FREE COUNTRY WOULD DISAPPEAR:

-- THE ONLY COUNTRY IN THE NEAR EAST WHERE FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND OPINION IS A REALITY. THIS WOULD BE A BITTER BLOW TO THE FREE WORLD.

-- TO SACRIFICE LEBANON FOR THE SAKE OF OIL WOULD BE A MISTAKE AND AN INJUSTICE.

-- WORDS ARE NOT ENOUGH; FACTS AND ACTION ARE NEEDED.

THE ABOVE GIVES RISE TO THE NECESSITY OF:

-- CREATING A CURRENT OF WORLD OPINION:

-- OBTAINING THE INTEREST OF THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES: THE ACTION OF EVEN THE SMALLEST WOULD CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE WHICH FACILITATE THE TAKING OF ACTION BY THE BIGGER COUNTRIES.

-- MAKING THE U.S.A. MOVE: THE BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, A.L.L., LEBANESE WORLD UNION. UNQUOTE.

4. THE SECOND MEMORANDUM, WHICH IS ENTITLED, "THE LEBANESE QUESTION" ADDRESSES THE QUESTION OF "IMMEDIATE SECURITY" AND OUTLINES A "POLITICAL FORMULA FOR THE FUTURE" BASED ON THE CONCEPT OF "REGIONALIZATION" AND A REVERSAL OF "THE POLICY OF EXCESSIVE CENTRALIZATION" FOLLOWED IN LEBANON SINCE 1920.

5. UPON CONCLUSION OF MEETING, THE PATRIARCH SAID THAT HE WOULD BE RECEIVED IN PRIVATE AUDIENCE BY POPE JOHN PAUL I LATER THIS WEEK AND THEN HE HOPED TO ENTER A HOSPITAL FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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COMPLETE PHYSICAL AFTER WHICH HE MIGHT UNDERGO A HERNIA OPERATION. THUS, HE EXPECTS TO REMAIN IN ROME FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER TEN DAYS TO TWO WEEKS. PLEASE ADVISE US IN THE EVENT A FURTHER MEETING WITH PATRIARCH APPEARS DESIRABLE.HOLMES

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